

SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP (SMG)

**WEDNESDAY, 22 AUGUST 2018 at 9.30AM
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

APPROVED

Present: Lesley Hogg
Tara Caul
Richard Stewart
Simon Burrowes (deputising for Gareth McGrath)

In Attendance: Janet Hughes
Rose Morwood
Robin Ramsey
Paula McClintock
Karen Martin
Ken Eccles
Jonathan McMillen
Angela Kelly
Martina Dalton
Eddie Kelly

Opening/Review

The meeting commenced at 9.30am.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dr Gareth McGrath, Director of Parliamentary Services, who is currently on a short-term secondment with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Mr Simon Burrowes deputised.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 19 June 2018 together with unrestricted papers were published on 26 July 2018.

4. SMG Action Points

The outstanding action points were reviewed and progress was noted.

Effective use of Corporate Support Systems – Lessons Learned

Action: Richard Stewart, Director of Corporate Services, to circulate a copy of the lessons learned report to Heads of Business (HoBs), in the interim period, whilst waiting for the registry to be developed.

Management Accounts – Decision Authorisation System (DAS) Guidance

Richard informed SMG that discussions with HoBs indicated that additional guidance was not required at this time, however, Lesley Hogg, Clerk/Chief Executive, felt that there was still a need to produce and issue some basic guidance.

Action: Richard to arrange for DAS guidance to issue to HoBs, explaining what each column on the DAS Report refers to and highlighting the areas that they need to monitor e.g. Requirement end date and how subsequent payments made.

Robin Ramsey joined the meeting at 9.45am for agenda items 5 and 6.

5. Political Update

Lesley Hogg confirmed that the Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry would be resuming shortly and advised of the expected date for conclusion of Oral Hearings.

Lesley also stated that consideration would need to be given to reviewing those temporary staff redeployments with an end date of 30 September. SMG agreed to review this in line with the continuing activities exercise that is currently being undertaken.

CORPORATE SUPPORT

6. Draft Commission Agenda

SMG reviewed the draft Commission agenda for the next Commission meeting.

Proposed items for the meeting include:

- Clerk/Chief Executive Report
- Request to Review Procedures Regarding Members and Disability
- Events Policy
- Pay Review
- New Parliament Buildings Security System
- Administration of Determinations and Management of Litigation
- Update on Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Review of the Broadcasting Contract

Proposed date for the next Commission meeting is 3 October.

Robin reminded SMG that Members' ability to table Assembly written questions resumes on 3 September 2018.

Robin Ramsey left the meeting at 10.22am.

Paula McClintock joined the meeting at 10.22am for agenda item 7.

CORPORATE SERVICES

7. Management Accounts

Paula presented the Management Accounts for July 2018.

SMG noted the revised forecast for income and expenditure for the 2018/19 year.

Paula highlighted the level of anticipated under spend against the opening 'reduced continuing activities' budget, as previously agreed by SMG and advised SMG of associated surrenders.

SMG was also provided with an analysis of the year to date position in relation to income, Secretariat salaries and administration costs.

SMG noted that the overspend reported in relation to administration costs was mainly due to a divergence between expenditure incurred and the budgets profiled by budget managers. Paula stated that the importance of accurate monthly profiling was highlighted in the communication recently issued by the Finance Office to budget managers in relation to the profiling exercise for August to March 2019.

Paula advised SMG of an increase in the potential settlement figure to HMRC as a result of the ongoing HMRC taxation review and proposed producing a summary of the review for Directors.

Action: Paula to prepare a summary of the ongoing HMRC taxation review for Directors.

Paula advised SMG of three new capital requests from business areas totalling £17k. SMG considered the requests and was content for them to be added to the capital plan given that it is now very unlikely that the Parliament Buildings Security System (PBSS) project will be delivered in this financial year.

Paula informed SMG that at the next monitoring round in September careful consideration would need to be given to surrendering and transferring funds within business areas. Paula to liaise with budget managers in relation to planned capital expenditure between now and the end of the financial year, particularly in relation to the status of the PBSS,

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and HyperVHosts/Storage Area Network (SAN) projects.

SMG reviewed the latest DAS reports and Paula asked Directors to stress to their HoBs the importance of reviewing DAS reports regularly to ensure the records are up to date at all times.

Action: Directors to ensure that their HoBs review DAS reports regularly and update as necessary.

Lesley thanked Paula and her team for their continued work on the DAS reports.

Paula McClintock left the meeting at 10.54am.

Karen Martin joined the meeting at 10.54am for agenda item 8.

8. HR Management Information

SMG noted the Staff in Post (SiP) figure on 1 August 2018 (including agency and seconded staff) was 316.6 compared with 318.6 on 1 June 2018.

Karen confirmed that there had been no change to the temporary arrangements currently in place to cover maternity or long-term sickness, temporary promotion and/or deputising arrangements and agency workers since last reported to SMG in June.

SMG reviewed the current redeployment figures and as referred to earlier in the meeting, agreed to give further consideration to the extension of those temporary redeployments with end dates of 30 September 2018, in line with the outcome of the recent continuing activities reporting exercise.

Karen confirmed that consultation had taken place with Trade Union Side (TUS) in relation to the potential extension of existing merit lists and that the matter had now been referred to the Employee Relations Group (ERG) meeting in September 2018 for further discussion.

Sickness absence information was provided and showed little change in the figures as reported to the June SMG meeting.

Karen Martin left the meeting at 11:08am.

Change to agenda running order.

Ken Eccles joined the meeting at 11:15am for agenda item 10.

10. New Parliament Buildings Security System

Following SMG's previous discussion in February 2018 on a new Parliament Buildings Security System, Ken provided SMG with further information in relation to the proposal to proceed with the acquisition of a new Internet Protocol (IP) based Security System for Parliament Buildings.

Ken stated that he had growing concerns about the current system and that the most viable option was to replace it and he outlined the timeline for the replacement project.

Ken also presented a draft Commission paper on a proposal to proceed with the acquisition of a new IP based Security Management System for Parliament Buildings.

SMG reviewed the draft paper and suggested some amendments.

Tara reminded Ken that the business case should focus on the business need and that the normal procedure is that the Procurement Strategy should be developed with the Procurement Office after the business case is finalised and agreed.

Lesley requested that the updated business case be presented at the September SMG meeting.

Action: Ken to present the updated business case in relation to the new Parliament Buildings Security System to the September SMG meeting.

Simon Burrowes joined the meeting at 11.34am.

Action: Ken to update the draft Commission paper as requested by SMG and re-submit for final approval prior to the October Commission meeting.

Action: Richard to present a paper on the New Parliament Buildings Security System to the Commission at its October meeting.

Ken Eccles left the meeting at 11:36am.

Jonathan McMillen joined the meeting at 11:36am for agenda item 11.

LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND RESEARCH SERVICES

11. Management of Litigation

Following the Commission meeting in June 2018, SMG was asked to consider an issue in relation to the Management of Litigation.

Tara presented a draft Commission paper on the subject.

SMG approved the contents of the Commission paper subject to the paper being divided into two distinct sections, one dealing with the administration of salaries and expenses determinations and the other dealing with the management of litigation.

Action: Jonathan to update the draft Commission paper as discussed and send a revised copy to Lesley Hogg and Richard Stewart for further consideration, prior to presentation at the October Commission meeting.

Action: Paper on the Administration of Determinations and the Management of Litigation to be presented to the Commission at its October meeting.

Jonathan McMillen left the meeting at 12.38pm.

Angela Kelly and Martina Dalton joined the meeting at 12:38pm for agenda item 12.

12. Commission Submission: Update on the Implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

SMG noted that the majority of the activities in relation to the Project Plan for the GDPR Project Team had been completed.

SMG also considered and approved a draft paper for presentation at the October Commission meeting providing an update on the implementation of GDPR compliance.

Action: Tara to present an update on the implementation of GDPR to the Commission at its October meeting.

SMG thanked Angela and Martina for all their hard work in bringing this project to completion.

Angela Kelly and Martina Dalton left the meeting at 12:46pm.

9. Methodology on the review of the Assembly Commission's approach to Recruitment & Selection and Induction

SMG considered the methodology that will be applied to the review of the Assembly Commission's approach to Recruitment & Selection and Induction.

SMG approved the methodology, subject to the inclusion of benchmarking and a comparison of recruitment and selection activities with other entities.

SMG was content that the activities listed at paragraph 15 of the paper be taken forward.

Action: Head of HR to ensure that the methodology includes benchmarking and a comparison of recruitment and selection activities with other entities.

Action: Head of HR to take forward the activities listed at paragraph 15 of the paper.

13. Bring Your Own Device Policy (BYOD)

Tara presented this paper and referred SMG to when this issue was last discussed in May 2018, at which point SMG expressed a preference for Option 2 of 3 i.e. *'Revise the present BYOD policy and permit Assembly Commission staff to use personal mobile devices for Commission business and to connect to the Commission email system as set out in the revised draft policy which contains enhanced security requirements'*, subject to further consultation.

Tara confirmed that consultation had taken place with the Head of Information Systems (IS) and that revisions had been made to the current policy in line with SMG's preferred Option 2.

SMG reviewed the revised draft policy and was content to approve subject to some minor amendments.

Action: Tara to arrange for the revised policy to be issued to Secretariat staff.

14. Personal Data Breach Report

SMG reviewed the Personal Data Breach Report presented by Tara for the period 22 May 2018 to date and was content that the appropriate action had been taken to address the breaches outlined.

SMG also agreed that a review needed to be carried out, to ensure that SMG remained content that only data breaches which are formally reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) are reported upon in the Annual Corporate Governance Report.

Action: Tara to arrange a meeting with the Clerk/Chief Executive and Directors to discuss the reporting of data breaches in the Governance Statement contained within the Annual Report and Accounts prior to its publication.

The meeting suspended at 1.36pm and resumed at 2.02pm.

Eddie Kelly joined the meeting at 2.02pm for agenda items 15 and 16.

15. Update of Corporate Governance Framework

Eddie presented the latest version of the Corporate Governance Framework.

Eddie advised SMG that the two main revisions to the Framework since it was last approved in January 2016, were in relation to the 'SMG Terms of Reference' and the 'Risk Management Strategy'.

Following discussion, SMG approved the revised version of the Framework subject to some minor drafting amendments.

Action: Eddie to update the Framework as agreed by SMG and arrange for it to be published on the Assembly website.

16. Review of Internal Audit Plan 2018/19

Eddie referred SMG to the draft Internal Audit Plan which was considered at its April 2018 meeting and following a request to review the scope of the plan, presented an updated 2018/19 Internal Audit and Resource Plan to SMG for further consideration and approval.

Following review of the updated Internal Audit Plan, SMG requested that it be updated to record the actual days taken to carry out the reviews already undertaken as opposed to estimated days and that consideration be given to the scope of follow-up reviews in order to better inform the resource requirement. SMG approved the plan for presentation at the October Secretariat Audit and Risk Committee (SARC) meeting subject to this minor amendment.

Action: Eddie to update the plan as recommended by SMG.

Richard and Lesley highlighted the need for business areas to be prepared for internal audit visits and Lesley proposed, if this was not already the case, that Internal Audit carry out pre-audit visits with the business areas to agree a timeline for the audit and provide them with a list of the documents that would require review.

SMG requested that delivery of the plan be kept under review during the year to ensure that sufficient scope was achieved in order to be able to deliver an overall opinion at year end and in order to identify whether any additional resource might become available.

Eddie Kelly left the meeting at 2.37pm.

DIRECTORATE UPDATES

17. Directors' Updates

SMG noted the Directorate updates.

Corporate Services

Richard advised SMG that only 46 members of staff had acknowledged that they had read the revised Fraud Prevention and Anti-Bribery Policy.

Action: Richard to arrange for a further email to issue to staff seeking acknowledgement that they have read and are familiar with the requirements contained in the revised Fraud Prevention Policy and Anti-Bribery Policy.

Legal, Governance and Research Services

Tara advised SMG that Ashleigh Mitford had taken over the position of Governance Officer on a temporary basis.

Tara also reminded SMG that Directorate Risk Registers should now be submitted to the Governance Office on a monthly basis.

Parliamentary Services

Lesley advised SMG that Peter Hall would be taking forward the Assembly Commission action to prepare an options paper for the development of a Youth Assembly and that he was aiming to have a paper for SMG to consider by December 2018.

OTHER ITEMS

18. AOB

There was no other business.

19. Date of next meeting – 24 August 2018

The date of the next meeting is Thursday, 20 September 2018 at 9.30am in Room 29.

20. Proposals for Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Sustainable Development – Annual Management Review
- Equality and Good Relations Staff Survey
- Review of Business Cases and Justifications
- Review of the Broadcasting Contract
- New Parliament Buildings Security System Business Case

- Review of the Events Policy
- Review of Procedures Regarding Members and Disability

The meeting ended at 3.05pm.